United Nations S/2013/198

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 March 2013

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2075 (2012), in which the Council requested that I continue to inform it of progress in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), and to bring to its attention any violation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area (S/2011/384, annex). The report also provides an update on progress made in the implementation of the additional tasks mandated to UNISFA under Security Council resolution 2024 (2011) related to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. In addition, it provides an update on the situation in Abyei and on the deployment and operations of UNISFA since my previous report on the matter issued on 25 January 2013 (S/2013/59). Finally, the report contains my recommendations regarding the review of the mandate of UNISFA for possible reconfiguration, pursuant to paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution 2075 (2012), in the light of the compliance by the Sudan and South Sudan with the decisions set forth in resolution 2046 (2012) and their commitments, as set forth in the Agreements of 20 June, 29 June, 30 July 2011 and 27 September 2012, including the redeployment of all forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, achieving full operational capability for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and completing the full demilitarization of the Abyei Area.

II. Security situation

2. The security situation in the Abyei Area was generally calm but tense during the reporting period. The Sudan oil police force of between 120 and 150 personnel remained deployed in the Diffra oil complex, in violation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement and Security Council resolutions 1990 (2011), 2032 (2011), 2046 (2012), 2047 (2012) and 2075 (2012). On three occasions between 15 and 21 February, around 12 oil police force personnel were found moving outside the oil complex in the areas of Mekines, Farouk and Ajaj escorting oil pipeline maintenance teams and carrying out administrative duties.

3. As mentioned in my reports of November 2012 and January 2013, an unauthorized armed group that entered the eastern part of the Abyei Area in the vicinity of Um Khariet in November 2012 continues to maintain a limited presence

Please recycle

in the Area. The group is equipped with small arms, and 6 to 10 of its members have been observed on separate occasions extorting money from vehicles using the Diffra-Thurpader road.

4. A number of isolated incursions by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the South Sudan Police Service and the Sudanese Armed Forces were also reported within the UNISFA area of responsibility. On 11 February, an SPLA soldier was found by a UNISFA patrol in Thurpader with a gunshot wound and was treated by the Force before being sent back to South Sudan. On 12 February, two armed men dressed in South Sudan Police Force uniforms were stopped by UNISFA in Marial Aachak and were sent back to South Sudan. On 20 February, six armed Sudanese Armed Forces soldiers entered the UNISFA area of responsibility at Farouk, located approximately 75 kilometres from the Abyei northern border, attempting to travel to the Diffra oil installation. They were stopped by UNISFA troops and returned back to the Sudan. On 6 March, 16 SPLA soldiers, travelling in a vehicle, entered the Abyei Area and were seen by UNISFA in the vicinity of Antony. They later crossed back towards Aung Thou, South Sudan. Another group of eight SPLA soldiers was observed by UNISFA on 9 March moving in the same area. On the same day, UNISFA was informed by local residents that approximately 20 unidentified armed men were seen on the Dongup and Tajalei road. All these movements of armed elements inside the Abyei Area are violations of the 20 June 2011 Agreement by the Government of the Sudan and the Government of South Sudan.

5. During the reporting period, the traditional migration routes into South Sudan from the Abyei Area remained largely closed, which adversely impacted the migration process. Warrap State authorities continued to deny access to the nomads for the fifth consecutive year.

6. Following several violent incidents, including the killing under unclear circumstances of three Misseriya migrants in Cliq, Unity State and South Sudan, on 9 January, the nomads moved back into the Abyei Area, where their traditional grazing areas are circumscribed by the presence of a larger number of Ngok Dinka returnees and their cattle. Consequently, tensions between Abyei communities for access to scarce pasture lands and water have increased and, in the absence of systemic intercommunity dialogue, placed a severe strain on the migration process. While the Ngok Dinka resisted sharing water points with the Misseriya nomads, the latter, disregarding the advice of UNISFA, made several attempts to graze livestock close to the Ngok Dinka-dominated areas of Tajalei, Noong, Makir, Todach, Colognial, Marial Achak and Dokura.

7. Between 18 and 20 February, UNISFA troops convinced herders to bring back around 2,000 cattle of the Awlad Umran clan, which had strayed into areas close to the Ngok Dinka villages from Colognial to Atay, and 300 Misseriya cattle from Tajalei. On 22 February, a Misseriya nomad armed with a knife injured two UNISFA troops in Nay Nay, as they were advising him to avoid entering the area in search of pasture and water for his cattle. On 11 March, around 4,000 Misseriya cattle were turned back from Allal and Noong to their corridor, after they entered areas close to the Dinka villages. With most migration routes to South Sudan blocked, and water and pastures depleted in the Abyei Area, some Misseriya nomads have uncharacteristically moved north of the Abyei Area in search of sustenance for their livestock.

8. Currently around 100,000 migrants and 1.6 million cattle are in the Abyei Area. Incidents of cattle rustling involving both the Misseriya migrant and Ngok

Dinka communities increased during the period under review. Misseriya nomads accused the Ngok Dinka of looting 32 of their cattle from the Makir area on 16 January. They then briefly prevented a United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) contractor from operating in Makir until their cattle were returned. That was followed by a series of cattle raids perpetrated by both communities. On 24 February, the Ngok Dinka of Dokura village alleged that 312 cattle were stolen by armed Misseriya nomads. On 28 February, UNISFA organized a meeting between Ngok Dinka and Misseriya representatives in Shegei and Marial Achack, in order to prevent an escalation of violence. Both communities agreed to cooperate with UNISFA to retrieve their respective livestock.

9. Around 21,600 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have so far returned to the Abyei Area, with about 4,500 of them in Abyei town. On 22 January, 1,526 Ngok Dinka IDPs arrived in Abyei from Wau in South Sudan, in an organized convoy of 77 vehicles. The return was reportedly funded and organized by Abyei civil society organizations based in Juba and the Government of South Sudan. Most of the Ngok Dinka IDPs returned to locations in and around Abyei town, with some going to villages in northern Abyei. Ngok Dinka IDPs have also commenced the reconstruction of their houses in several locations, including Banton, Tajalei, Leu, Marial Achak, Archengiel and Antony.

10. The Government of the Sudan has concurrently informed UNISFA that it will be coordinating the returns to Abyei of all Ngok Dinka and Misseriya persons who fled to the Sudan during the 2008 and 2011 hostilities. On 11 March, a four-day conference organized by the Ngok Dinka diaspora in Abyei town urged for coordinated and organized returns in order for Ngok Dinka IDPs to return to the Abyei Area and to normalize their lives at the earliest. For this, they declared that it was essential to have basic services and infrastructure, which was not possible in the absence of functioning Abyei Area Administration institutions and government. The conference, which was funded by the United States Agency for International Development, brought together around 300 participants, many of them from various locations within South Sudan.

11. UNMAS operations continued to focus on priority areas of return for the Ngok Dinka IDPs and the migration routes. UNMAS has also commenced survey operations in areas with a residual mine threat. Since the last report, UNMAS and its implementing partner have recovered 493 explosive remnants of war and over 500 kg of small arms ammunition, completed general mine action assessment in over 25 villages and declared 63,860 square miles of land as "cleared".

III. Political developments

12. During the reporting period, the Sudan and South Sudan made very little progress in the implementation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement. Following the deadlock reached during the eighth meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, held in Addis Ababa on 12 and 13 January 2013, the parties referred the issue of the composition of the Abyei Area Council to Presidents Bashir and Kiir. The two Presidents discussed the issue during their summit meeting in Addis Ababa on 25 January 2012, but failed to make any substantial progress.

13. The ninth meeting of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, which was scheduled for 15 February, did not take place following differences between the

parties on the agenda. However, the parties' police technical teams did meet in Abyei town on 4 February to discuss the size and composition of the Abyei Police Service. Unfortunately, the parties failed to reach an agreement. At the request of the Sudan and South Sudan, on 5 February, UNISFA presented them with a draft concept note on the Abyei Police Service that could serve as the basis for future discussions on its framework. UNISFA has not received any comments on the draft concept note from either party.

14. The parties also did not make any progress on the resolution of the final status of the Abyei Area. During their summit meeting on 25 January 2013, Presidents Bashir and Kiir reiterated their agreement that they would address the final status of the Abyei Area after the Abyei Area Administration, Abyei Area Council and Abyei Police Service have been constituted. At its 353rd meeting, the African Union Peace and Security Council urged once again the two Presidents to continue their engagement on the basis of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel proposal of 21 September 2012. On 12 March the two parties agreed on an overall implementation matrix for their signed agreements, in which they committed to form the Abyei Area Administration and Council by within 7 days and the Abyei Police Service within 30 days of receiving instructions from Presidents Bashir and Kiir on the composition of the Abyei Area Council.

IV. Status of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism

15. The Sudan and South Sudan continued to make progress towards the implementation of their agreement to establish the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, as provided in the Agreement on Border Security and the Joint Political and Security Mechanism of 29 June 2011, the Agreement on the Border Monitoring Support Mission of 30 July 2011 and the Agreement on Security Arrangements of 27 September 2012.

16. On 22 February, in a letter to the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, President Salva Kiir reiterated the readiness of the Government of South Sudan to withdraw its forces from the 14-mile area, after having received assurances from the Government of the Sudan that existing administrative arrangements would be maintained. Thereafter, during an extraordinary session of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, held in Addis Ababa on 8 March, the Sudan and South Sudan agreed on the modalities for the establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, the operationalization of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and the activation of all the other security arrangements, as of 10 March. As part of the agreement, the Joint Political and Security Mechanism adopted a detailed implementation plan for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.

17. The agreed implementation plan retained the two-phased approach for the roll-out of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. The first phase or establishment of an initial operating capability would consist of the relocation of the temporary headquarters of the Mechanism from Assosa, Ethiopia, to Kadugli (Southern Kordofan, Sudan), the establishment of sector headquarters in Kadugli and Gok Machar (Northern Bahr el-Ghazal, South Sudan) and the deployment of four teams of monitors. The full operating capability would be established with additional sector headquarters in Buram (South Darfur, Sudan) and Malakal (Upper

Nile State, South Sudan) and the deployment of 10 teams of monitors. The number and the location of team sites would be determined on the basis of security assessments of the Mechanism. The parties further committed to implement the initial and full operating capabilities, respectively, within 30 and 90 days. The plan also provides for a UNISFA force protection of 860 troops and 266 military support personnel. The troops would be divided into four self-sustained companies, each co-located within a sector headquarters and the Mechanism headquarters. UNISFA, the Sudan and South Sudan would initially deploy 70 monitors each and gradually increase the number to 90 each based on progress made in the operationalization of the Mechanism.

18. The parties also agreed on their respective obligations and corresponding timelines for the establishment of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone. These obligations include the withdrawal of forces to their side of the Zone by 17 March, followed by the complete redeployment of forces from the Zone by 5 April. The Joint Political and Security Mechanism requested UNISFA to confirm and report on the completion of each step of these processes. On 10 March, President Kiir announced that he had given orders for SPLA to withdraw from the border areas immediately. On 11 March, SPLA announced that it had begun its withdrawal from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, and that the process would be completed by 5 April. On the same day, the Government of the Sudan announced the commitment of its forces to the agreed upon timetable and stated that the Sudanese Armed Forces had also begun their withdrawal from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone. The agreement further retained previously accepted proposals for the activation of the Ad Hoc Committee and the opening of 10 border-crossing corridors.

19. Following the agreement of the parties, UNISFA immediately began implementing its plan to support the operationalization of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. The priority tasks during the reporting period included the movement of staff and equipment from Assosa to Kadugli and the verification of the withdrawal of forces by both Governments to their own side of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone. For this purpose, UNISFA engaged with both parties to establish their respective withdrawal plans and to determine the exact area in which the verification patrols would be conducted. UNISFA also informed the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan that it was ready to transport their monitors who had been withdrawn from Assosa, from Khartoum and Juba to Kadugli. As at 20 March, the Sudan and South Sudan had respectively deployed 26 and 25 monitors to Kadugli. Concurrently, five demining teams of UNMAS contractors have been pre-positioned in Juba and are awaiting deployment to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism sector headquarters sites, while UNMAS has commenced training on explosive hazards for the personnel of the Mechanism.

V. Humanitarian situation

20. Humanitarian assistance has increased in the resettlement locations of the Abyei Area. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) assisted with non-food items, while the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provided emergency shelter material. UNHCR also facilitated other needs, including land allocation for landless returnees.

21. The failure of the parties to establish the Abyei Area Administration and the resulting lack of basic services presented a considerable challenge for the sustainable return of displaced persons during the reporting period. Humanitarian access to Abyei remained limited, despite the commitment of the Government of the Sudan, in January 2013, to allow free humanitarian access into the Abyei Area.

22. The World Food Programme provided food assistance to over 78,500 people, while the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported a community-based child protection network of 25 villages. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations vaccinated an estimated 50,000 livestock in southern Abyei. UNICEF and IOM continued their efforts to mitigate the effects of water scarcity by increasing access to potable water through the rehabilitation and maintenance of seven water projects, while UNICEF, with support from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, was engaged in mapping the existing water points.

VI. Protection of civilians

23. No significant incidents of intercommunal violence occurred in the Abyei Area, despite increasing challenges to law and order, including cattle rustling and the rarefaction of water and grazing land for livestock. This is attributed in part to the conflict mitigation strategy of UNISFA, which continued to secure a relative calm between the two communities. The Force facilitated over 50 peace and security meetings between members and elders of both communities. However, the presence of small arms within the area of responsibility remains a matter of concern.

24. UNISFA remained deployed and continued to monitor deployments in all flash points in the Abyei Area, with a view to preventing intercommunal violence and ensuring the protection of civilians. Resource-related flash points followed the movement of the nomads on the migration routes. UNISFA kept pace with the evolving situation by maintaining a constant presence at these locations. The Force identified 14 concurrent flash points along the migration routes within the Abyei Area.

25. The Abyei town market also remained a point of intercommunal tension, with high risk of rapid mobilization of the local youth in the event of an incident. A UNISFA platoon and police deployed in the Abyei town market and the Agok market since early March have been conducting patrols and providing specialized advice pertaining to maintenance of law and order. UNISFA also established, with support from the Government of the United States of America, public lighting in the market area to enhance general security.

26. Cases of illegal tax collection and extortion have been on the rise in various locations, along the roads of the Abyei Area, particularly in the east, including Um Khariet, Diffra and Thurpader. Many of these illegal "tax collectors" are armed. UNISFA continues its efforts to address this problem by engaging with the communities and intensifying patrols in the affected areas.

27. There were no new developments during the period under review with regard to the operationalization of human rights monitoring in the Abyei Area, as called for under paragraph 14 of resolution 2075 (2012). Meanwhile, an increasing number of gender and sexual-based offences continue to be reported in the Agok area south of Abyei town, as reported to UNISFA by the Agok prison services.

VII. Deployment of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

28. There has been no change in the number of troops currently deployed on the ground. Of its authorized military strength of 4,200, some 3,970 were deployed as at 20 March (see annex I). The remaining 230 are authorized for deployment within the UNISFA air aviation unit, and the ranks of military observers and staff officers.

29. During the reporting period, the United Nations police achieved around 20 per cent deployment capacity. Five additional members of the United Nations police deployed after they were issued visas by the Government of the Sudan, bringing the total strength of the United Nations police in UNISFA to 11. The visa application for the Ghanaian Senior Police Adviser has been pending since April 2012.

30. The UNISFA military component continued to be deployed in three sectors (see annex II). Besides its permanent company operating bases, UNISFA has currently deployed temporary operating bases at Faroukh, Um Khariat, Abyei town, Abyei Highway, Noong, Alal, Talalei, Leu, Marialachak, Dungoup, Colognal, Arik and Banton. UNISFA also has a permanent presence in the communally sensitive areas of the Abyei town market and mosque. In view of the migration and increased number of returnees, the military component committed all its resources, including reserves, across all sectors, in order to maintain a credible presence within the Abyei Area Administration.

VIII. UNISFA support

31. UNISFA continued its efforts to provide for accommodation, rations and road access for the troops during the reporting period. Roads and bridges were repaired to open the main supply and lateral communication routes to company operating bases and temporary operating bases. Preparatory work for the construction of the Antony airport progressed during the reporting period. There was a delay in ration supply to the troops owing to taxation-related bottlenecks in the South Sudan border, which was partially met by airlifting food supplies.

32. Around 50 per cent of the troops are currently based in tented accommodation in the temporary operating bases across the Abyei Area. Hard-wall prefabricated living and official accommodations were provided for 1,200 personnel in the company operating bases at Antony airstrip, Abyei Camp, Dokura, Diffra and Todach. Additional prefabricated working areas have also been erected at UNISFA headquarters to cater for the current staff component.

33. The Force has presented the complete list of all outstanding visas for UNISFA personnel (including 38 international civilian staff, 18 United Nations Volunteers, 1 Senior Police Adviser and 26 Military Officers) and 32 United Nations contractor staff to the Government of the Sudan.

IX. Mandate review

34. Further to Security Council resolution 2075 (2012), the United Nations conducted a review of the mandate of UNISFA for possible reconfiguration in the light of the compliance by the Sudan and South Sudan with the decisions set forth in

Security Council resolution 2046 (2012) and their commitments as set forth in the Agreements of 20 June, 29 June, 30 July 2011 and 27 September 2012. The review further took into account the implementation plan for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, adopted by the parties within the framework of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in Addis Ababa on 8 March 2013. The objective of the review was two-fold: to assess the ability of UNIFSA to fulfil its mandate, given the current security situation in the Abyei Area, and to support the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism based on the implementation plan.

35. UNISFA is operating in an increasingly complex security environment. Despite a relative calm, the security situation in the Abyei Area is extremely volatile. Within the Abyei Area, there are both internal and external potential sources of conflict. Within the Abyei Area, the potential for conflict between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities remains high. The two communities remain highly polarized and unwilling to reconcile. An increase in the return of displaced Ngok Dinka has elevated the potential for conflict owing to the physical proximity between the two communities during the migration season and throughout the year in areas, such as Abyei town, which are populated by both. The security situation could deteriorate if either of the parties was to urge the local communities to increase the rate of settlement in the Abyei Area in expectation of a possible referendum to determine its final status. Such a development could easily lead to hostilities between the parties and the local communities.

36. Another security-related challenge in the Abyei Area is the complete absence of institutions of government. The lack of a local police presence has resulted in a law-and-order vacuum. The vacuum is a challenge for UNISFA because of the existence of both intra- and intercommunal crime. Apart from traditional justice mechanisms, there is no functioning judicial system in the Abyei Area and the existing detention facilities are in an extremely poor condition. Finally, the Abyei Area remains exposed to the threat of incursions from unauthorized armed groups.

37. Currently, the three UNISFA infantry battalions, which are deployed throughout the Abyei Area and in all three sectors (North, South and Centre), have fully committed their available reserves, owing to the pressing need to monitor and provide security for the Misseriya migration. The infantry battalions are also being used, along with the artillery and tank units, to provide a credible deterrence to any unauthorized incursion of armed groups into the Abyei Area. Bearing in mind the lack of a police presence, the infantry battalions are, to a certain extent, also engaged in the maintenance of law and order, albeit without the appropriate capability. Finally, the gap in deployed troops (3,970 out of 4,200), which has been earmarked for the aviation unit and is not expected to be deployed until 2014, will be utilized to provide temporary surge support to the limited existing engineering capacity of UNISFA, assist in the completion of troop accommodation, infrastructure tasks and the maintenance of a supply route.

38. Following the parties' agreement on the implementation plan for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism during the last session of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, UNISFA is expected to deploy to the border between the Sudan and South Sudan, including the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone. In order to fulfil its mandated task to support the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, including the provision of security, UNISFA will be required to take into account the following security-related factors. First, the overall

border area, notwithstanding the recent commitment of the parties to withdraw their armed forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, is expected to remain militarized. As such, the possibility of cross-border security incidents still remains high. Second, the border area continues to include an array of rebel-militia groups. Third, conflict between border communities over access to resources and tribal boundaries remains a significant source of conflict, despite the security agreements reached between the two Governments.

39. In accordance with the implementation plan, UNISFA would provide a force protection unit of 1,126 troops for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. This unit would be comprised of a headquarters element and four self-sustained companies located within each of the four Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism sectors. Each company would consist of 267 troops divided into five infantry platoons, as well as medical, logistics, transport and maintenance detachments. The five infantry platoons within each sector would allow them to have a dedicated reserve capacity. This would enable the deployment of one platoon to provide security for the sector headquarters, one reserve platoon and three platoons to conduct verification tasks, in up to three locations.

40. For the initial operating capability, the necessary facilities for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and sector headquarters are already available in Kadugli. In Gok Machar, UNISFA would establish a tented camp as soon as the South Sudan authorities provided it with the identified land, and then would construct hard-wall accommodations as soon as the necessary financial resources and related equipment were available. For the full operating capability, UNISFA would construct hard-wall accommodations in the two additional sector headquarters in Buram and Malakal. Furthermore, two to three team sites would be established in each of the four sectors. Their number and location would be determined on the basis of joint security assessments. The team sites would consist of only tented camps and would be operational only during the dry season.

Proposed UNISFA reconfiguration

41. In the current environment, the redeployment of 1,126 UNISFA troops from the Abyei Area to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism force protection unit, without any further reconfiguration of UNIFSA, would carry significant security risks. These risks include a reduction of the ability of UNISFA to implement its conflict prevention and mitigation strategy during the migration season. This includes maintaining buffer zones between the local communities and their cattle and conducting intensive patrolling. It would also diminish its ability to monitor and provide a deterrent effect and protect the Abyei Area from incursions from unauthorized armed groups and intervene in a timely manner in intracommunal and intercommunal disputes or security incidents. The likelihood of intercommunal incidents escalating into open confrontation, with the associated loss of lives and political tensions between the Sudan and South Sudan, would be very high.

42. The deployment of formed police units, as a means of relieving the UNISFA military component of some of its tasks, would be feasible only if there were a drastic improvement in the political and security situation in the Abyei Area, including the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration and Abyei Police Service, with the full concurrence of the two Governments and the local communities. In the current environment, although the UNISFA military component

is not best suited to maintain law and order in the Abyei Area, it is exercising a degree of flexibility in addressing general security concerns and law-and-order challenges simultaneously.

43. Bearing in mind the recent progress made by the parties in the implementation of their security agreement, it is critical for UNISFA to be able to provide the required force protection that will enable the beginning of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism operations, while continuing to maintain security in the Abyei Area.

44. In the light of the above, I would recommend an increase in the authorized strength of the UNISFA military component by 1,126 troops for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism force protection unit. This course of action would allow for the immediate operationalization of the Mechanism, in accordance with the implementation plan agreed upon by the parties. I would also recommend that current UNISFA troop levels in Abyei be maintained to address the significant security challenges in the Area.

45. I would propose that the Security Council review these recommendations every six months, given that the progress of the parties in the implementation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement and an improvement in the security environment on the Sudan-South Sudan border may allow for the troop ceiling to be decreased in the future. Furthermore, I would urge the Security Council to consider the actual progress made by the parties in establishing the Abyei Area temporary institutions, in order to determine whether it would be feasible for a United Nations police presence to take over tasks related to law and order that are currently carried out by the UNIFSA military component.

X. Observations and recommendations

46. While the Abyei Area is largely peaceful, challenges to security are on the rise. The distrust and animosity between the Abyei communities is increasing as a result of the spiralling cycle of cattle rustling and revenge attacks, as well as the acute competition over decreasing resources, including water and pasture lands. With the number of Ngok Dinka returnees to the Abyei Area growing, the density of both the human and the livestock population within the Abyei Area has assumed serious proportions. The potential for intercommunal violence is significant. I call on both communities to exercise restraint and seek to resolve their problems through dialogue.

47. Traditional migration routes through the Abyei Area to South Sudan are increasingly blocked. Many migrant nomads are compelled to remain within or return to the Abyei Area, which increases the pressure on limited resources for the sustenance of their livestock and creates opportunities for conflict. I call upon the communities and their leaders, as well as the national and State-level authorities of both countries to respect international conventions on traditional migratory rights across their territories and to urgently put mechanisms in place to ensure a successful and peaceful migration.

48. The presence of the Diffra oil police within the Abyei Area constitutes a violation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement, as does the entry of armed SPLA and South Sudan Police Service personnel into the Area. Similarly, the presence of other unauthorized armed groups represents a threat to the maintenance of peace, security

and stability in the Abyei Area. I urge the authorities of both countries to take immediate measures to ensure the complete withdrawal and prevent the entry of any armed element into the Abyei Area.

49. I am pleased to note that the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan are working together, through the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, in order to develop a framework for the Abyei Police Service. Abyei has remained in an administrative vacuum for too long, which has an adverse impact on the lives of the inhabitants of the Area. I strongly urge both Governments to immediately establish the Abyei Area temporary institutions.

50. I welcome the decision of 8 March of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism to establish the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and activate the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism as at 10 March. I urge the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan to continue fulfilling their commitments to withdraw completely from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone, to ensure the successful functioning of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and to restore security within their common border area.

51. Taking into account the conclusions of the UNISFA mandate review, I encourage the Security Council to endorse the proposals in section IX above regarding the reconfiguration of UNISFA.

52. In conclusion, I would like to thank the UNISFA Head of Mission, Major-General Yohannes Tesfamariam, the senior leadership and all staff of UNISFA for their contribution to help restore stability to the Abyei Area, and to maintain security and peaceful coexistence between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities under very difficult conditions.

Annex I

Composition of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei military component (including the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism)

Country	*Description*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Benin	Experts on mission	3		4
	Contingent Troop	1		
Bolivia	Experts on mission	3		4
	Contingent Troop	1		
Brazil	Experts on mission	1		3
	Contingent Troop	2		
Burundi	Experts on mission	1		1
Cambodia	Experts on mission	1		1
Ecuador	Experts on mission	1		1
El Salvador	Experts on mission	1		1
Ethiopia	Experts on mission	76	10	3 892
	Contingent Troop	3 598	208	
Ghana	Experts on mission	3		5
	Contingent Troop	2		
Guatemala	Experts on mission	2		3
	Contingent Troop	1		
Guinea	Experts on mission	2		2
India	Experts on mission	2		4
	Contingent Troop	2		
Indonesia	Experts on mission	1		2
	Contingent Troop	1		
Kyrgyzstan	Experts on mission	1		1
Malaysia	Experts on mission	1		1
Mongolia	Experts on mission	2		2
Mozambique	Experts on mission	1		1
Namibia	Experts on mission	1		1
Nepal	Experts on mission	3		5
	Contingent Troop	2		
Nigeria	Experts on mission	3		4
	Contingent Troop	1		
Paraguay	Experts on mission	1		1
Peru	Experts on mission	2		3
	Contingent Troop	1		
Philippines	Experts on mission	1		2
	Contingent Troop	1		

Country	*Description*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Russian Federation	Experts on mission	1		3
	Contingent Troop	2		
Rwanda	Experts on mission	2		4
	Contingent Troop	2		
Sierra Leone	Experts on mission	3		3
Sri Lanka	Experts on mission	5		6
	Contingent Troop	1		
Ukraine	Experts on mission	2		4
	Contingent Troop	2		
United Republic of Tanzania	Experts on mission	1		1
Uruguay	Contingent Troop	1		1
Zambia	Experts on mission	1		1
Zimbabwe	Experts on mission	2		3
	Contingent Troop	1		
Total		**3 752**	**218**	**3 970**

Annex II

Map of the deployment of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei